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Machines de Théâtres.

Élévation en coupe de la charpente du comble avec les courroies et le développement d'un timbre dégradié pour le service des hauts, et abîmé en coupe, avec de Dosses et d'une riche prison avec des figures ou figures précédentes l'arrivée d'un Doss, et Doss du char de Mété.

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Theater Designs

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Museum

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National Museum
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Cover:

Attributed to Francesco Galli da Bibiena
(1659-1739), Italy (Bologna)

Stage Design for a Town Square, 1720s-1730s

Pen and brown ink, gray, blue, and pale rose
wash; 28.8 × 42.4

Friends of the Museum Fund; 1938-88-50

Inside Front Cover:

Robert Bénard (active 1734-1772), France, after
Radel (18th century), France

Theatrical Machines for Movable Clouds at

L'Opéra, Paris, 1772 (From Denis Diderot,
Encyclopédie, vol. 10, *Recueil de Planches sur les*
Sciences, les Arts Libéraux et les Arts Mécaniques
avec leur explication, plate 15.)

Engraving; 39.1 × 47.2

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Richard B. Freund;
1977-86-34

All measurements are given in centimeters.

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Foreword

1. Eugene Berman (1899-1972), United States (born in Russia)
Stage Set for Act One, Scene Two, of "Don Giovanni" by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, 1957
Pen and black and red ink, watercolor; 15.2 × 13.7
Purchased in memory of Ogden Codman; 1958-138-3

The art of theater is said to be the oldest and one of the most powerful and immediate of the arts. It is, one might add, one of the more ephemeral, too. The reality of a play, an opera, or a ballet is short-lived; it exists only during the brief span of a performance. While we now have the means to document theatrical events electronically, the only visual hint we have of theater in previous times is through designs for theater architecture, costumes, and stage sets.

The Cooper-Hewitt's large and magnificent collection of theater designs attests to the important role theater has played in the lives of people. The drawings in the collection have been executed in many different media and styles and provide a good history of theater over five centuries, beginning with the days when theaters had fixed architecture and when mechanical equipment, seating, and lighting were far less sophisticated than they are today.

Stage sets and costumes were and still are intended to enhance the meaning of a theatrical event—to set the mood, give the effect—without distracting from the performers. They are vital in creating the make-believe that transports audiences beyond where they are to where they are expected to be. Although theater has been changed by technology and our high decibel life-styles, it has not lost its magic, and one prays that it never will.

For their kind help in enabling us to present this publication on theater designs in the Cooper-Hewitt, we are deeply grateful to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Mobil Corporation, both strong supporters of the arts.

Lisa Taylor
Director

2. Agostino Carracci (1557-1602), Italy (Bologna), after Bernardo Buontalenti (1536-1608), Italy (Florence)
Stage Set for First Intermezzo of "La Pellegrina": The Harmony of the Spheres, 1589 (print made in 1592)
 Etching and engraving; 24.1 x 35
 Gift of George Arnold Hearn; 1896-31-6

"It is particularly fortunate that such a body of material should be found in the city in which American theatrical interests are concentrated and we venture to suppose that it would be difficult to find elsewhere in this country an equally varied and interesting stock of original stage designs," wrote Rudolph Berliner in 1941 in a ground-breaking article about the Cooper-Hewitt Museum's large collection of theatrical designs. In the four decades since then, the collection has grown enormously, to incorporate works done by the most recent theater, stage, and costume designers. The bulk of the collection, however, was purchased by the Museum in 1938 from Mrs. Edward D. Brandegee. She, in turn, had acquired them from the sale of the collection of Giovanni Piancastelli (1845-1926), the first director of the Borghese Gallery in Rome. Piancastelli's passion was the art of perspective; from 1870 to 1906 he collected well over twelve thousand drawings—most of which related in some way to Italian architectural or theatrical design of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries.

The strongest works in the Cooper-Hewitt theater collection today remain those Italian stage drawings done between

the 1670s and the 1830s, particularly the powerful studies done by members of the famous Bibiena family (figures 16-17 and Cover). Consequently, the overwhelming number of designs discussed here represent Italian scenography of the baroque period and just after. But with the addition of other works from the Museum's collection—not only from Italy but also from France, Germany, England, Russia, and the United States—we can trace the broadest outline of modern European theater from its origins in the Renaissance to the present day, not only in stage designs, but in theater architecture and costume designs as well.

Piancastelli's obsession with perspective reflected in a small way the Renaissance artist's own consuming passion for the new art that allowed him to depict "reality" in a scientific and rational way. The first recorded use of perspective to create a "realistic" illusion in a stage set occurred in 1508, when Pellegrino da Udine (c.1467-1547) created the setting for Ludovico Ariosto's *La Cassaria*, the earliest comedy to be written in Italian. Pellegrino and those artists who followed him, such as Raphael, Gerolamo Genga, Baldassare Peruzzi, Andrea del Sarto, Giulio Romano, and Bastiano da Sangallo, featured

many of the same elements in their illusion-creating stage sets: a central axis, one-point perspective, a flat backdrop, and a symmetrical, illusionary setting of an exterior scene conceived of as a framed painting—with distance being conveyed by a series of planes parallel to the picture plane. Some sixteenth-century sets used angle wings executed in relief in stucco, while others consisted of revolving prisms (*periaktoi*, as they were called), with each flat side done in perspective. All of these designs were for court-sponsored events, at which the duke or prince or pope was seated in the center of the hall or theater auditorium where the one-point perspective could be viewed to best advantage. These Renaissance artists tried to revive the supposed perspective settings of the ancient Roman theater. Their early attempts, which grew out of the humanistic milieu of the time, created something entirely new that has left its mark on the theater to this day.

The first well-documented perspective stage designs were executed for wedding festivals. Beginning in 1539, and continuing for nearly two hundred years, many of these records (both visual and literary) derived from theatrical productions for

3. Jacques Callot (1592-1635), France (Nancy),
after Giulio Parigi (1571-1635), Italy (Florence)
*Stage Set for Third Intermezzo of "La Liberazione
di Tirreno e d'Ardea" by Andrea Salvadori: The
Realm of Love, 1617*
Etching; 20.5 × 29.0
Purchased in memory of Mrs. William G. Fitch;
1962-192-6

4. Jacques Callot (1592-1635), France (Nancy)
*Stage Design, Illustration for Act Four Finale to "Il
Solimano" by Prospero Bonarelli: Sacking and
Burning of Aleppo, 1619*
Etching and engraving; 20.5 × 28.2
Purchased in memory of Mrs. William G. Fitch;
1962-192-4

TERZO INTERMEZIO DOVE SI VIDE VENIRE AMORE CON TUTTA LA SUA CORTE: A DIVIDER LA BATTAGLIA.
G. Parigi del. J. Callot del. et sculp. F.

Medici weddings in Florence. By far the most famous of these Medici productions was *La Pellegrina*, a comedy performed on May 2, 1589, for the wedding of Grand Duke Ferdinando de' Medici and Christine of Lorraine. Bernardo Buontalenti (1536-1608), the leading scenographer in late sixteenth-century Italy, designed the sets for the comedy and its adherent intermezzi (figure 2). (An intermezzo is an interlude or entr'acte between the acts of a comedy; the origins of both opera and ballet lay in these intermezzi.) The designs, including this one for the first intermezzo, entitled "The Harmony of the Spheres," became landmarks in the history of scenography. Fashioned entirely of clouds in perspective, the scene shows the starry heavens where Necessity spins the Harmony of the Universe, while Sirens, Heroes, Virtues, and Fates look on. *Nuvole*, or cloud machines (see Inside Front Cover),

5. Stefano della Bella (1610-1664), Italy (Florence), after Alfonso Parigi (1606-1656), Italy (Florence)
Stage Set for Finale to "Le Nozze degli dèi" by G.C. Coppola: Equestrian Ballet and Ballet of Cupids and Cavaliers in Heaven, 1637
 Etching; 20.6 × 28.2
 Purchased in memory of Annie Schermerhorn Kane; 1946-30-1(8)

6. Nicolas Cochin (1610-1686), France, after Giacomo Torelli (1604/08-1678), Italy (Venice) *Stage Set for Prologue to "La Finta Pazza" by Giulio Strozzi: Garden of Flora, 1645* Etching; 23.4 × 30.5; A76

became a constant feature of the theatrical setting throughout the baroque period. Never before 1589, however, had a non-structured, non-architectural, non-landscape scene been shaped into a perspective stage design.

More typical settings in the late 1500s and early 1600s included palatial courtyards (figure 3), town squares (figure 4), or royal gardens (figure 6). Many of these settings were designed by Giulio Parigi (1571-1635), Buontalenti's successor in Florence, the real center for advanced scenography during most of the sixteenth and the first third of the seventeenth centuries. Like Buontalenti, Parigi was architect and

engineer to the Medici court. Parigi was the first artist to etch his stage designs (or to have them etched) and the first to spend a great portion of his time in theatrical endeavors. As a result, his output was large and well recorded, and provides a rich documentation of Medici theatrical productions during the first third of the seventeenth century. Parigi's setting for the third intermezzo to Andrea Salvadori's *La Liberazione di Tirreno e d'Arnea—a veglia* (or nighttime entertainment) held on February 6, 1617, for the wedding of Caterina de' Medici and Duke Ferdinando Gonzaga—depicts the Realm of Love (figure 3). As seen in Callot's etching, the

Realm of Love is a large piazza with six Composite columns supporting elaborate entablatures on either side; a mock battle between Constancy and Inconstancy has just been halted by Venus, who sits in the clouds with her retinue. Parigi's 1617 design, which he borrowed from his own 1608 setting, influenced decades of scenographers after him (cf. figures 8, 9, and 13).

Jacques Callot (1592-1635), one of the most talented printmakers of the baroque period, created imaginary stage representations (figure 4) to be used as illustrations in a playbook, *Il Solimano*, published in 1619 in Florence. The play had actually been performed only the year before in

7. Giovanni Battista Galestruzzi (1615/18-after 1669), Italy; after Giovanni Francesco Grimaldi (1606-1680), Italy (Rome)
Stage Set for Scene Three of "La Vita Humana overo Il Trionfo della Pietà" by G. Rospigliosi and M. Marazzoli: Garden Scene, 1656
 Etching, 39.7 × 31.5
 Friends of the Museum Fund; 1938-88-8566

Ancona; by the end of the century, *Il Solimano*, a tragedy concerning Suleiman the Magnificent, became one of the most popular plays ever produced in Italy. Callot, who worked for many years as Parigi's assistant, undoubtedly used his master's sketches in designing the classically solemn, tripartite perspective setting. The flames and smoke that engulf this scene of pillage, while not actually simulated for a real production, were sometimes depicted by Parigi in staged hell scenes.

Parigi's son Alfonso (1606-1656) carried out his father's designs in new, far grander ways. In 1637, for yet another Medici wedding—this time between Grand Duke Fer-

dinando II de' Medici and Princess Vittoria della Rovere of Urbino—the Pitti Palace courtyard was transformed into a temporary outdoor theater. For the finale to this full opera production, entitled *Le Nozze degli dèi* (The Wedding of the Gods), Alfonso adopted a four-level, three-part stage setting of a cloud-filled heaven (figure 5). The celebration of the marriage of Jupiter and Juno and all other gods and goddesses is represented. Below the uppermost level of the apotheosis of the gods, Castor and Pollux and other horsemen perform an equestrian ballet (real horses were used); below them are a dozen cupids dancing on floating clouds; and the lowest

level shows two dozen cavaliers performing a circle dance while others create the letters *F-O* and *V-A*, much in the manner of a football half-time spectacle today, for Ferdinando and Vittoria, the wedding couple. With dozens of dancers, singers, and musicians on the stage, with the swirling movement of clouds, lights, and colors, the total effect must have been dazzling.

The Parigi, the first scenographic family in Italy, influenced artists all over Europe, including Inigo Jones in England, Callot in France, Cosimo Lotti in Spain, and Joseph Furttenbach in Germany. In Italy, too, their impact was felt. Giovanni Francesco Grimaldi (1606-1680) freely adapted his

8. Matthias Küssel (1621-1682), Austria (Vienna), after Ludovico Ottavio Burnacini (1636-1707), Italy (Mantua, Venice)
Stage Set for Act Five, Scene One of "Il Pomo d'Oro" by Francesco Sbarra: Villa of Paris, 1668
 Engraving; 25.1 × 43.0
 Purchased in memory of Mrs. William G. Fitch; 1962-192-14

garden setting of 1656 (figure 7) from Giulio Parigi's garden setting of 1608. Grimaldi transformed the earlier design for the 1656 production of Rospigliosi's *Il Trionfo della Pietà*, an allegorical opera held in Rome to honor Queen Christina of Sweden. The delicate mannerist garden scene of 1608 had become the rather heavily ornate architectural space of the later baroque.

Giacomo Torelli (1608-1678), one of the most famous Italian scenographers of the

second half of the seventeenth century, owed a great deal to the Parigi. In his Venetian sets, Torelli basically followed the Florentine traditions of the single perspective vista, the architectonic forms derived from natural elements, and the pronounced symmetry of design. Like the Parigi, Torelli was a master technician whose marvelous machines and rapid scene changes awed his spectators. Torelli indirectly acknowledged his debt to the Florentine stage designers in the stage settings he created for the Pari-

sian production of Giulio Strozzi's *La Finta Piazza* in 1645 (figure 6). This prologue setting of the Garden of Flora, designed to impress and honor Anne of Austria, Queen of France, depicts many of the elements used by the Florentines (strict perspective that focuses the action, the use of machines and clouds). Included also is Torelli's development of the "median transept," which tied the two sides of the set together at the focal point. The median transept, which first appeared in Giulio

9. Ludovico Ottavio Burnacini (1636-1707), Italy (Mantua, Venice)
Stage Design, possibly for "Enea in Italia" by A. Draghi and J.H. Schmelzer: Hall of Heroes, 1678
 Pen and black ink, gray wash; 62.6 × 92.1
 Friends of the Museum Fund; 1938-88-1

Parigi's 1608 garden setting, was reused by many other designers well into the century (cf. figure 13).

While Torelli continued to elaborate on his tightly focused, one-point perspective sets in Paris, Ludovico Burnacini (1636-1707) began to refine Torelli's Venetian settings in Vienna. Burnacini, son of Giovanni Burnacini (c. 1605-1655), Torelli's main rival in Venice, worked largely in Vienna at the Imperial Court Theater, where he designed innumerable sets. In

1668, in celebration of the marriage of Leopold I, Francesco Sbarra's *Il Pomo d'Oro* was performed (figure 8). Burnacini created the Villa of Paris set on Torellian models, but an even earlier source was Giulio Parigi's setting of the Garden of Alcina of 1625. The powerful architecture of Torelli and the exquisite details of Parigi have become weakened, and overly elaborated surface architecture has been carried out in a rather repetitious and dull perspective. Ten years later, in his wonderfully de-

tailed setting for *Enea in Italia* (figure 9), Burnacini carried out this same rigid perspective to exaggerated lengths in a monotonous progression of columns, relieved only by the magnificent surface decoration.

About a decade later, the long line of the Florentine scenographic tradition came to an end with the work of Jacopo Chiavistelli (1621-1698). We know of only one production for which he could have created the sets: *Il Greco in Troia* (figure 10), held in 1689 in the Teatro della Pergola for the

10. Arnauld van Westerhout (1651-1725), Flanders, after Jacopo Chiavistelli (1621-1698), Italy (Florence)

Stage Set for Act One, Scene One of "Il Greco in Troia" by Matteo Norris: Outside Walls of Troy with Wooden Horse Being Pulled into City, 1689
Engraving in libretto; 22.9 × 32.4
Gift of the Friends of Drawings and Prints;
1975-42-2

wedding of Grand Prince Ferdinando III de' Medici and Princess Violante Beatrice of Bavaria. His rigidly defined setting of the Walls of Troy created a shallow acting space that tended to emphasize the action. Gone are the flights into infinite space, the tight symmetry, and the elaborate stage machines, all so characteristic of earlier settings. His designs are more a reflection of the classical Bolognese paintings of Domenichino and Francesco Albani than of scenographic conventions.

In Mantua, elaborate stage productions took place in the Teatro Ducale (later called the Teatro Vecchio). Giuseppe Mitelli (1634-1718), a noted Bolognese painter and printmaker, is credited with designing a setting for one such production. The drawing of this setting (figure 11), which was engraved by Mitelli, shows an elaborately developed proscenium arch—an element

first employed in Florence almost a century earlier. The arch was meant to enframe the illusionistic, three-dimensional "picture" of the stage setting. Here the Teatro Ducale's proscenium displays the armorial bearings of the Duke of Mantua. On the sides, the female personifications of Sculpture, Vocal Music, Instrumental Music, and Painting are set into columned niches that support detailed entablatures. The scenography itself is stylistically connected to Torelli's *Bellerofonte* setting of 1642 and, even more, to Domenico Mauro's *Divisione del Mondo* setting of 1675; all three settings use symmetrical sets, cloud machines, and twisted columns.

Other finished presentation drawings of stage designs in the Museum's collection include magnificent studies given to Girolamo Fontana (active 1690-1714). Nephew of the famous theatrical architect

Carlo Fontana, Girolamo Fontana took over the completion of the Galleria of the Palazzo Colonna in Rome around 1698. His involvement with the Galleria can be seen in this ornate setting of a celestial palace floating on clouds before a landscape (figure 12). The comparatively understated proscenium arch of 1674 (figure 11) has now given way to an undulating, curvilinear enframing. The same horror of the straight line is reflected in the setting itself, which recalls many of Torelli's scenographic solutions and also reveals the influence of Florentine models.

About the time that these flamboyant designs were created, the architect Andrea Pozzo (1642-1709) published his major tract on pictorial and architectural perspective, *De Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum* (Rome, 1693). In it, Pozzo gives ideal solutions to constructing theaters and

11. Attributed to Giuseppe Maria Mitelli (1634-1718), Italy (Bologna)

Design for a Proscenium and Stage Set for an Opera in Mantua: Courtyard with Athena and Apollo in Clouds and Soldiers Below, 1674

Pen and brown ink over black and red chalk; 33.1 × 45.5

Friends of the Museum Fund; 1938-88-114

12. Attributed to Girolamo Fontana (active 1690-1714), Italy (Rome)
Design for a Proscenium and Stage Set: Grottoes with Celestial Palace, 1690s
Pen and brown ink, gray and brown wash; 37 × 44
Friends of the Museum Fund; 1938-88-23

designing sets. The Museum owns a preliminary drawing of one such ideal scheme for a stage set of a palace courtyard (figure 13), a design Pozzo later had engraved for his book. Rather than creating a new principle for scenography, Pozzo's treatise assimilated and documented all the various systems of stage perspective. We see in this design reminiscences of the one-point perspective "flight into the infinite" of Torelli (figure 6) and Burnacini (figures 8 and 9).

Pozzo's projections for the ideal theater saw partial fruition in the designs of Francesco Galli da Bibiena (1659-1739) for the Teatro Filarmonico in Verona (figure 15). From 1715 to 1729, Francesco Galli da Bibiena, one of the better known members of this famous family, designed the theater, considered to be one of the most beautiful in Italy. Its inauguration took place on January 6, 1732, with the performance of Vivaldi's *Fida Ninfa*. Commissioned by the Accademia Filarmonica, the theater was best known for its projecting boxes oriented toward the stage and its majestic proscenium. The detailed drawing by Joseph Chamant of the U-shaped auditorium (by then, a characteristic shape for a theater) may have served as a study for an engraving of the plan. The movable *telari* (flats) on

the stage are shown next to the grooves for the horizontal *telari*; the forestage outline recalls Fontana's undulating stage front (figure 12).

Half a century later, Baldassare Orsini (1732-1810) wrote a handbook on stage design based on his experience in designing the stage and scenery for the 1781 opening of the Teatro del Verzarò (today, the Teatro Morlacchi) in Perugia (figure 20). This quick sketch by the young Giuseppe Barberi (1746-1809), a Roman architect known for his fantastic architectonic visions, may have been done after studies by the Perugian architect Vincenzo Cioffi (active 1775-1805). Cioffi, in turn, must have worked at decorating the new building under the theater's chief architect, Alessio Lorenzini. In any event, in his handbook, Orsini uses just such a cross section of the Teatro del Verzarò to show how to establish the vanishing point and station point for perspective sets. For his handbook, Orsini looked not only at Pozzo and the Bibiena, but also at the theatrical illustrations in the new (1772) *Encyclopédie* by Diderot (see Inside Front Cover).

By the time Andrea Pozzo wrote his treatise on stage design in 1693, the simple one-point perspective that he illustrated

(figure 13) had fully run its course. Torelli continued, into the 1670s, to develop his designs on a strict, one-point perspective setting, as did Ludovico Burnacini, whose setting for *Enea in Italia* (figure 9) demonstrates how monotonous such a system can become, despite magnificent surfaces. Rigid adherence to a one-point perspective setting led in only one direction, as the Bibiena and the Galliari found. They broke with tradition and introduced the *veduta per angolo*, or the "vista at an angle." Diagonal or oblique perspective could now be employed to show a plurality of visual axes with many vanishing points. The new perspective could radiate at an angle to the picture plane, creating far more dynamic possibilities than the old system.

Francesco Galli da Bibiena, brother of Ferdinando, is thought to have created one of the more spectacular *scena per angolo* designs in the Museum's collection (see Cover), probably done as a presentation drawing; a variation exists in the Tordini collection in Milan. The dramatic crossing of the two axes, the ornateness of the imaginary architecture, the strong chiaroscuro from the lighting and the angle of view from below—all of these elements give the setting a sense of splendor and awe-

Scen. di Ballo scenico Romano

someness. Francesco, working in Vienna for Emperor Leopold, constructed a magnificent theater for which this stage design may have been intended.

Giuseppe Galli da Bibiena (1696-1757), nephew of Francesco, created numerous theatrical designs in the new *veduta per angolo* system. While working in Dresden for Emperor Charles VI, Elector of Saxony, he invented many stage designs and perspective studies for J.A. Pfeffel to engrave for *Architettura e Prospettive* (Augsburg, 1740), a book on Giuseppe's art. One such *veduta* is owned by the Museum (figure 16). This complex view of an imaginary courtyard, used by Pfeffel to engrave plate 10 in Bibiena's book, contains numerous theatrical references, although it probably was never meant for a stage setting. Because of the engravings in *Architettura e Prospettive*, Giuseppe, perhaps the most successful and prosperous of the eight Bibiena, left a more complete record of his scenography than did any other member of his famous family.

Among the many Bibiena drawings owned by the Museum are some that cannot easily be attributed to any one member of the family and are thought to be by students or followers. One such drawing (figure 17) shows a royal palace staircase

13. Andrea Pozzo (1642-1709), Italy (Rome)
Stage Design for a Courtyard, c. 1693
 Pen and brown and red ink, watercolors; 35 × 52
 Friends of the Museum Fund; 1938-88-4

leading to a grand courtyard. While impressive in itself as a theatrical setting or as a study of a grandiose, fictive architecture, the pen-and-ink drawing has the studied, meticulous air of the work of a pupil—in this case, probably a follower of Antonio Galli da Bibiena (1697-1774). Antonio, brother of Giuseppe, created many such dramatic staircases, with similar acornlike nobs and vase-shaped pins; his autograph designs, however, tend to be even more exaggerated in details and more elaborate in composition.

The theatrical designs of the great Italian architect Filippo Juvarra (1678-1736) are also represented in the collection by the work of a follower (figure 14). Juvarra's inspired stage settings usually consisted of a spatial idea or architectonic thought translated into theatrical terms; his brilliant designs reveal his preference for pure fantasy rather than illusion. Unlike the Bibiena, Juvarra invented imaginary successions of parallel planes rather than an angular scene of opposing perspectives. The Museum's drawing, inscribed by a later hand "di Don Filippo Giovara," reflects Juvarra's work in Rome: the triumphal arch and obelisk in the design bear the arms of Clement XI, pope from 1700 to

14. Follower of Filippo Juvarra (1678-1736), Italy
Roman Architectural Fantasy, c. 1710-20
 Pen and brown ink, pale lavender wash; 13.5 × 31.4
 Friends of the Museum Fund; 1938-88-166

15. Joseph Chamant
(1699-1768), France, after
Francesco Galli da Bibiena
(1659-1739), Italy (Bologna)
*Plan for the Auditorium and
Elevation of the Main Entrance
to the Teatro Filarmonico,
Verona, c. 1715*
Pen and brown ink, brown
wash over black chalk;
57.1 × 40.5
Bequest of Erskine Hewitt;
1938-57-1413

1721. The drawing appears to have been done by a student or follower of Juvarra, who himself designed many such triumphal arches and obelisks for festival decorators; the setting, which has Turkish arms on a pedestal in the foreground, may relate to a festival honoring Pope Clement's part in ending the Turkish threat.

Next to Juvarra and the Bibiena, the most famous name in Italian theater in the eighteenth century was Galliari. Through the work of the Galliari family, all of whom, like Juvarra, worked primarily in the Piedmont region, the various emerging aspects of Italian stage design were fully developed. In the Museum's beautiful study

of a forum or courtyard (figure 18), given to Giovanni Antonio Galliari (1718-1783), the youngest of Giovanni Galliari's three scenographer sons, the artist used a Juvarrian triumphal arch and columnar monument as well as a more developed Bibienesque *scena per angolo*. Yet Giovanni Antonio's style, much influenced by his better-known older brother Fabrizio (1709-1790), exhibits a lightness and clarity in execution not seen in the Bibiena, as well as a more human-sized scale—which becomes a major element of all late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century scenography.

Gaspare Galliari (1761-1823) worked

16. Giuseppe Galli da Bibiena (1695/96-1757), Italy (Parma)
Architectural Fantasy, c. 1719.
 Pen and brown ink, gray and blue-gray wash;
 53.6 × 96.1
 Purchased in memory of Mary Hearn Greims;
 1940-21-27

17. Manner of Antonio Galli da Bibiena (1697-1774), Italy (Parma, Milan)

Stage Design for a Palace Courtyard with Staircase

Pen and brown ink, brown, blue, and gray wash; 50.2 x 64.7

Friends of the Museum Fund; 1938-88-85

18. Giovanni Antonio Galliani (1718-1783), Italy (Milan)
Stage Design for a Palace Entrance with an Arch, 1770s
 Pen and brown ink, brown wash, and black chalk; 15.2 × 21.2
 Friends of the Museum Fund; 1938-88-41

19. Angelo Toselli (c. 1765?-1827), Italy (Bologna)
Stage Design for a Palace Courtyard, c. 1810
 Pen and brown ink, brown wash over black chalk;
 25.1 × 39.2
 Friends of the Museum Fund; 1938-88-418

with his father, Giovanni Antonio, in Milan and carried the family's scenographic traditions into the next century. While close in style to the designs of his father and of his uncle Fabrizio, Gaspare's stage designs show a distinct tendency toward naturalistic decor mixed with a certain "romantic melancholy." Gaspare's more realistic settings, which reflected the actual historical or archaeological facts about a locale, influenced a whole generation of Italian scene designers. Most of these younger designers, including Felice Giani (1758-1823), Alessandro Sanquirico (1789-1840),

and Antonio Basoli (1774-1848), are well represented in the Museum's collection. Angelo Toselli (c. 1765?-1827) was another, lesser-known, Bolognese practitioner of the new style. His designs (figure 19), while revealing his connections to the Galliari and late eighteenth-century scenographers, also display a more human scale, an interest in archaeological accuracy, and a sense of "appropriateness" to the play's subject matter. Just as the earlier scenographers mirrored the painting and architectural styles of their times, so, too, did the nineteenth-century stage designer. Neo-

20. Giuseppe Barberi (1746-1809), Italy (Rome)
Section of the Teatro del Verzaro (later Teatro Morlacchi) in Perugia, Decorated by Vincenzo Cioffi, 1778
 Pen and brown ink, brown wash; 21.1 × 27.8
 Friends of the Museum Fund; 1983-88-115

classicism, for example, clearly pervades Toselli's drawings.

The influence of both neoclassicism and romanticism can be seen in the work of Karl Joseph Koebel (1796-1856). A German architect from Mainz who worked in Italy from 1817 to 1856, Koebel's 1815 scenographic sketch (figure 21) shows how much more simplified nineteenth-century stage settings became. Gone are the imaginary, dramatic baroque structures; all is rational, with the simple one-point perspective of the Renaissance. Yet this view of an oriental temple typifies the nineteenth-century's romantic nostalgia for faraway places and times. Koebel's straightforward, boxlike set also reflects the influence of the major Berlin scenographer Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841), whose Temple of Apollo for Gluck's *Alceste* Koebel surely knew.

Verismo, the Italian word for *truth* or *realism*, typified not only the new operas of the late nineteenth century, but also their settings. With the introduction of gas lighting (and many other technical advances), the settings began to mirror more closely the realistic easel paintings of the period. Gaetano Malagodi (active 1850-1902), for example, depicted a cloister at night (figure 22) in such a way that we can scarcely distinguish his watercolor study as being a design for the theater. Malagodi, who worked in Rome at the Teatro Apollo during the 1860s and 1870s before settling in Bologna, designed his stage setting to create the naturalistic illusion of an oil painting. Realistic scenography, in fact, introduced the idea of real space with life-size, "real" objects in that space. Yet taken to the extreme, *verismo* sets eventually became dull historical reconstructions.

Originality and excitement returned to theatrical design during the early twentieth century. With the design centers shifting from Milan and Rome to Moscow and Paris, Russian artists such as Léon Bakst (originally Lev Samoylovich Rosenberg, 1866-1924), Simon Lissim (1900-1981), Pavel Tchelitchew (1898-1957), and Eugene Berman (1899-1972) created some of the most splendid theatrical designs ever produced. Bakst, known for set designs that introduced volumetric forms on stage, revolutionized the design of costumes (figure 23). To him, the costume played as great a part in the entire theatrical experience as the setting, the lights, and the music. Through the use of scarves, robes, and spears, his costumes enhanced the dynamic movement and form of the performers, as seen in this beautiful watercolor study of two pirates' costumes from Michel

Above:

21. Karl Joseph Koebel (1796-1856), Germany
(worked in Rome)

*Stage Design for the Entrance to an Oriental
Temple, 1815*

Pen and black ink, watercolor; 12.9 × 19.8
Friends of the Museum Fund; 1938-88-422

Below:

22. Gaetano Malagodi (active 1850-1902), Italy
(Rome, Bologna)

Stage Design for a Cloister at Night, 1869

Pen and black ink, watercolor; 23 × 34.5
Friends of the Museum Fund; 1938-88-447

Fokine's ballet *Daphnis et Chloë*. The production by Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, with music by Maurice Ravel, premiered at Paris's Théâtre du Châtelet on June 8, 1912, with Vaslav Nijinsky dancing the part of the shepherd Daphnis. The pirates' almost expressionistic costumes typify Bakst's love of brilliant colors and archaic forms inspired by Greek art. In 1913, when he painted these studies of his 1912 designs, he was at the height of his career in Paris.

Bakst's richly inventive designs appealed to many young Russian émigré artists in Paris, including Erté and Simon Lissim. Although the production was never mounted, Lissim designed the stage set of the interior of Elsinore Castle for Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (figure 26) in 1925 for the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre in Paris. Only in his early twenties at the time, Lissim was an

23. Léon Bakst (1866-1924), Russia
(worked in France)
Costume Design for the Pirates in "Daphnis et Chloë," by Michel Fokine, 1913
Pencil and watercolor; 26.8 × 39.5
Gift of Mrs. MacCulloch Miller; 1947-77-2

intimate of all the Russian émigrés, falling under Bakst's influence, as well as under the influence of the major personalities of the French modernist theater. Lissim was known for designing his sets with the simplest of means. In the *Hamlet* set, for example, he exhibits his knowledge of both French art deco and Russian constructivism (particularly of scenographer Alexandra Exter, 1884-1949), which he merged with strong desires for simplicity, fluidity, and mobility.

Like Lissim, Tchelitchev was a Russian émigré who spent most of his career in the United States and, also like Lissim, was deeply involved with the art movements of his time. Tchelitchev is best known today as a surrealist painter; his famous *Hide and Seek* oil painting of 1940-42 is now in the Museum of Modern Art. However, he also executed many brilliant ballet designs in

the '30s and '40s for Diaghilev and George Balanchine. One such costume design, a ballet costume of a masked figure, is in the Museum's collection (figure 32). The suggestion of a Renaissance costume could mean that this is a sketch for a character in an unrealized production of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, designed by Tchelitchev in 1944. In any event, his costume designs, which were often constructed in a spiraling or circular manner, always created a great sense of movement and energy in what he called the "spherical dimension of life."

Both Tchelitchev and Berman were key figures in a type of surrealist painting known as "neo-romantic," which concentrated on the effects of mystery and fantasy. Like the other Russian theatrical designers, Berman had emigrated to Paris, living there from 1918 to 1936, before settling in the United States; 1936 also marked Berman's

debut as a stage designer. During his many visits to Italy, he became fascinated with Italian architecture. This design for the palace terrace setting for Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (figure 1, one of three variations owned by the Museum) shows Berman's captivation with the evocative, timeless quality of Italian architecture. *Don Giovanni*, produced in 1957, was one of many stage designs Berman created for the Metropolitan Opera; others included sets for *Rigoletto* in 1952 and *The Barber of Seville* in 1954. His *Don Giovanni* set creates a compact, closed environment, yet one full of movement and playful fantasy.

The influence of these Russian designers was felt not only on the Continent and in America, but also in England. There, Edward McKnight Kauffer (1890-1954) designed powerful costumes (figure 24), the stylistic origins for which lay with Bakst,

24. Edward McKnight Kauffer (1890-1954),
United States (active in England)
Costume Design for King Henry in "Henry IV" by
Luigi Pirandello, 1925
Pencil and gouache; 47.3 × 31.0
Gift of Mrs. E. McKnight Kauffer; 1963-39-170

Lissim, Exter, Malevich, Tatlin—and particularly with Tchelitchew's geometric costume designs of the early 1920s. An American who spent almost his entire artistic career in London, McKnight Kauffer created numerous award-winning posters for the Underground and other British enterprises, as well as designing magazine advertisements and illustrations. He was among the first commercial artists in England to incorporate the new European art movements, such as cubism and constructivism, into his work. The costume design illustrated here was for the character of King Henry in Luigi Pirandello's *Henry IV*, for a production at the Everyman Theatre at Hampstead, London, which opened on July 12, 1925 (it had premiered in Milan only three years earlier). The avant-garde nature of the costume clearly suited Pirandello's existential comedy.

25. Donald M. Oenslager (1902-1975),
United States (New York)
*Stage Set for Acts One and Two of "On Whitman
Avenue" by Maxine Wood: Tilden's Home, 1946*
Pencil and watercolor; 36.5 × 61.0
Gift of the artist; 1960-226-10

26. Simon Lissim (1900-1981), Russia (worked in Paris and New York)
Stage Set for Act Four, Scene Two, of "Hamlet" by William Shakespeare: Castle Interior, 1925
Pen and black ink with watercolor; 39.8 × 64.7
Gift of the artist; 1936-65-1

Bakst's influence was also felt in the theatrical work of Umberto Brunelleschi (1879-1949), an Italian artist who lived and worked in Paris from 1900 to 1940. His settings of 1917 for *Le Felene* took Bakst's aesthetic and translated it into a floral stylization. The Museum owns one of his costume designs of 1914 (figure 27), which—except for the Bakst-like bright color and pattern—bears a closer relationship to Aubrey Beardsley's illustrations and Venetian eighteenth-century themes. This design, in fact, is for a luxurious album Brunelleschi illustrated, entitled *Masques et Personnages de la Comédie Italienne*. The costume for the *commedia dell'arte* character he chose to illustrate, Florindo, may never have actually been realized.

27. Umberto Brunelleschi (1879-1949), Italy
(worked in France)
Costume Design for the Commedia dell'Arte Figure
"Florindo," 1914
Pen and black ink with gouache and watercolor;
34.2 × 19.9
Friends of the Museum Fund; 1967-40-1

28. Freddy Wittop (b. 1921), United States
Costume Design for Angela Lansbury in "Dear
World" by Jerry Herman, 1969
Watercolor and gouache; 50.7 × 33.0
Gift of the artist; 1971-1-7

The Museum is fortunate to own some excellent examples of twentieth-century American stage design. Donald Oenslager (1902-1975), Robert Edmond Jones (1887-1954), and Oliver Smith (b. 1937) gave several of their designs to the Cooper-Hewitt. One of Oenslager's designs is for the stage set for the first and second acts of Maxine Wood's *On Whitman Avenue* (figure 25). The play, which opened at the Cort Theatre in New York on May 8, 1946, was directed by Margo Jones and produced by Canada Lee, who also played the leading lady. The setting shows the Tilden's home in a suburban Midwest development. During 1946, Oenslager was director of the Chicago Institute of Design, taught at Yale University, lectured widely, and designed thirteen stage settings for the Metropolitan

Opera and Broadway (including Garson Kanin's *Born Yesterday* and Noel Coward's *Present Laughter*). The set for *On Whitman Avenue* exemplifies many characteristics of Oenslager's work: a simplified and essential decor that is finely crafted, using the type of expression necessary to support the mood and character of the play. Oenslager employed his imagination to draw on all periods of stage design—whether the baroque, the romantic, the Russian constructivist, or an amalgam of these—yet his designs always remained imbued with a typical stylistic unity. Oenslager here has created a shallow acting area, featuring both inside and outside spaces in a straightforward, cheerful setting for Wood's sprightly comedy.

Oenslager influenced several genera-

tions of set designers while teaching at Yale University, among them Robert Edward Darling (b. 1937). Darling has worked as a design assistant to Ming Cho Lee, designing sets for numerous productions and more than thirty operas, including Richard Strauss's *Salome* for the Vancouver Opera in 1969 (figure 30). Darling's neo-expressionist setting recalls Oenslager's *Job* set of 1941 and his *Prometheus Bound* of 1939, as well as Oenslager's own *Salome* setting for a 1934 production at the Metropolitan Opera. Yet Darling's stage design for *Salome* is also a distinctive artistic statement that supports the underlying themes of Strauss's opera; the design, in fact, is characteristic of Darling's approach to scenography.

As with the stage designs, contemporary American costume design often draws

Above:

29. Robert O'Hearn (b. 1921), United States
(New York)

*Stage Set for Scene from "Pique Dame" by Pëtr Ilich
Tchaikovsky: A Ballroom, 1965*

Oil on canvas, 45.4 × 60.8

Gift of the artist; 1970-49-23

Below:

30. Robert Edward Darling (b. 1937),
United States

Stage Set for "Salome" by Richard Strauss, 1969

Pencil and gouache; 34.5 × 43.0

Gift of the artist; 1971-3-2

upon an actual historical period for its inspiration. Such is the case with Freddy Wittop's (b. 1921) beautiful designs for Angela Lansbury's costume in the Broadway production of *Dear World* (figure 28). The musical, with music and lyrics by Jerry Herman (based on Jean Giraudoux's *The Mad Woman of Chaillot*), opened at the Mark Hellinger Theatre in 1969. The delicately drawn costume study, with all its exaggerated feathers, lace, and frills, helps to create the Lansbury character. Like Oenslager, Robert O'Hearn, born in 1921 in Indiana, has created some of his finest settings for the Metropolitan Opera. His sumptuous stage designs of 1965 for Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame* (figure 29) in the Cooper-Hewitt collection recall the grandeur of the finest baroque settings and were carried out with the same enthusiastic attention for detail and improbable architecture.

Karl Eigsti (b. 1938), also an Indiana native, was resident designer at the Arena Stage (1962-64) in Washington, D.C., and

31. Karl Eigsti (b. 1938), United States
Stage Set for "Inquest" by Donald Freed, 1970
 Pen and black ink, watercolor, acrylic,
 and cut-out photographs; 31 × 41
 Gift of the artist; 1970-52-9

at the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre (1969-70) in Minneapolis. In April 1970, when he designed the courtroom set for Donald Freed's *Inquest* (figure 31), he was principal designer at the American Shakespeare Festival.

Not tied to one approach or style as earlier designers were, contemporary theatrical artists choose from any style or period in fashioning their sets. Their pur-

pose is always to support the play, opera, or ballet—to enhance the action and to further the illusion. The Cooper-Hewitt collection allows us to view the span of the theatrical arts from the late 1500s to the late 1900s, from Italy to France to America. And as Rudolph Berliner wrote in 1941, the "scope of the collection . . . cannot fail to satisfy."

Arthur R. Blumenthal

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32. Pavel Tchelitchev (1898-1957), Russia
(worked in France and United States)
Carnival Costume Design, c. 1940-50
Pen and blue ink; 24 × 15.3
Gift of Alexander J. Yow; 1978-164-1

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